1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

593 The close intimacy between a mother and her children finds a different expression according to the sex of the child. A mother with her daughters is on terms almost of camaraderie as together they tackle the heavy domestic responsibilities of their sex. Between mother and son, because of the opposition of their sexes, there is some abruptness, especially during those years when the son is trying compulsively to behave in a masculine manner. But their relationship is none the less close, unconditional acceptance of her son and his deeds by the mother, protective concern on the part of the son for his mother. To take in vain the name of a man's mother is to offer him the worst possible insult. The bond between mother and son is
[562] indestructible. She gave him life; in him she fulfils herself and transcends the moral inferiority of her sex. Although a mother is more in the company of her daughters, it is the sons who are closest to her heart. They are her pride and the significant achievement of her life.

593 I have said that the mother plays a role expressive of the
152 solidarity of the family. A Sarakatsanos sometimes says that 'The mother is the heart of the family'. Any kind of breach in the physical unity of the family distracts and worries her. After the first few years of her marriage, a wife shows less eagerness to pay visits to the family of her birth. She begins to fret and agitate to return after only one or two days' absence from her home, particularly if she has not brought all her children with her. For the first days after a daughter's marriage or a son's departure on military service a mother is inconsolable. Squatting by the hearth and rocking back and forth on her haunches, she maintains a continuous low moaning broken only by bouts
593 of deep sobbing. It is the wife or mother who is the leading
764 mourner at the death of a husband, son, or daughter. For the
152 twenty-four hours which intervene between death and burial, she does not leave her position at the right of the head of the
[573] corpse. During this time she is the chief singer of dirges (μοιρολόγια) in which she recites the golden qualities of the dead man or woman. But for the most part, she expresses her grief in simple and terrifying screams of lamentation (σκούζει), while she and the other women beat their breasts and tear at their
593 hair and cheeks (μαδιοῦνται). For a son a mother remains in
765 full mourning for five years whereas a father does not continue

1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

beyond the second year. Each morning at dawn, each evening at dusk, during these long years she sings her dirges and lamentations again. Even when the period of mourning is completed, she will never again dance at a festival, or sing a ballad, during the remaining years of her life.

If the role of the mother expresses the solidarity of the family, its honour and integrity largely depend on her virtue. A mother who is thought to have lost her virginity before marriage or, afterwards, to have been guilty of adultery, or even an apparent inclination towards it, infects her children with the taint of her dishonour, and however closely these children may conform to right ways of behaviour, they cannot retrieve the reputation of their family.

Although the honour of a woman is so intimately connected with the disciplining of her sexual activity as to be almost synonymous with it, any lapse from social rectitude also affects her honour; for it is argued that if she fails in the one respect, she is very likely to fail in other and more critical situations concerned with her sexual virtue. The wife of Costas Pistiolis is a woman who cannot restrain her laughter. It is held against her that 'she always jokes and never talks with seriousness'. This is an attitude unbecoming to a married woman of modesty with children and responsibilities, for it betrays a lack of self-discipline. Her family is, in any case, poor and despised. She ought to be conscious of so many worries that laughter should be impossible for her. It is insulting to suggest to a young man that he might consider marrying the daughter of this family. The girl, Chrysanthe, is acknowledged to be modest, comely, and hard-working. But it is pointed out that, although there is no positive evidence of sexual misconduct on the part of the mother, her uncontrolled and unwomanly behaviour makes the possibility of this not unlikely. And despite the seeming virtue of the girl Chrysanthe, the fact that she is the daughter of such a woman leads a man to await with some confidence the time when serious moral faults in her character will be discovered. Thus, upon the honour of the mother depends the honour of her children in a sense which logically precedes the mutual responsibility which members of a family in their conduct bear at all times for the reputation of the family. A brother can take some action to cleanse the dishonour of a sister, either against

764 travel with their *nekrallaxia*, or death change — a
[961] new suit of clothes to be buried in. A body is laid, clad in this new attire, pointing away from the sun on the floor of his hut or his tent, with his hands and feet bound together. Kinsmen watch over the dead all night, lest a dog, a cat, or a hen should walk over him. Finally the body is wrapped in a woolen blanket or two goat's-hair cloaks and then borne away to burial on a bier of branches. As he is carried out, somebody breaks a wooden spoon, and no one looks back, for fear of Charon, who lurks behind them in search of fresh prey.

In the old days, they buried the body without a priest — "he died unchanted," the phrase goes. Before the earth covers the body, his hands and feet are unbound and his clothes are torn, so that he may move more freely "to where he is going." If a shrine were handy, there they would lay him; but a shepherd who died in the mountains was buried below a rock or on the top of a slope, whence he could look down on his flocks, should they return another year. His crook was planted nearby, and a woman's grave was marked by her
[301] distaff with its spindle and thread. She was buried with all her rings and chains and earrings
● 765 and her festival array of gold coins. When her
[171] relations went to dig her up again, after three, five, or seven years, to translate the bones in a box or a bag (as they do all over Greece), these trinkets were retrieved and washed and handed
[775] on to the children. Occasionally the bones of the skeleton are found to be rigid, "not to be cut"; this means that the deceased has turned into a vam-
[789] pire. It calls for priestly intervention and exorcism, and the body is left for another year to loosen up. Mourning for a dead son lasted for five years, and to emphasize this sad period, women would sometimes wear their clothes back to front. The two traditional hours of the day for the renewal of lamentation are sunset and the dim hour before daybreak, when the first crows begin to caw.

000 All this is a far cry from Daphnis and Chloë, a long, long way from Theocritus and Moschus and Bion. The shepherds of Vergil are further off still, early milestones on a flowery path that meanders through Herrick and Watteau and Fragonard to the Petit Trianon and Sèvres. The attributes of the Good Shepherd in the New Testament are as irrelevant as the virtuous and rather simple image that the shepherd's calling conjures up in the West.

181 Shepherds who never leave the plains have little interest. But those of the mountains are active, lean, spare, hawk-eyed men, with features that strike one as having been scooped out and chiseled

/Women's Apparel/

/105 cont./

291
142

Fig. 89

291 10th On the head the women wear a veil the color of which, as well as the manner of knotting it changes according to circumstances and the individual status. As a rule, the young girls wear white veils up to the age of 18 years. After that age the veil is printed with white flowers on a black background. Only the women in mourning and old women wear black veils. /106/

[531]
[765]
[888]

301 11th In order to conclude the presentation of the women's apparel it is suitable also to enumerate the ornaments: first the necklace which, in most cases, is made up of several strands of gold coins. Then come the earrings, the jewelry ornamenting the head veil, the brooch for the collarette, all of silver.

Moreover, the belt is closed with a clasp made of two pieces of engraved solid silver which sometimes weighs several kilograms. Finally, silver chains crossing the chest are embellished with multi-

/336 cont./

764 Next, a white velentza (blanket) is spread out in the center of the hut, the deceased placed upon it, his eyes are closed and his feet tied with a rope so that "he will not shift in his grave," actually so that he will not become a ghost! (13)

13. M. Eliade, in Images et Symboles, p. 146, footnote 57, says, citing Frazer: La crainte des morts, /The fear of the dead/ pp. 53-59, that it is always as defense against the spirits of the dead that corpses are tied up, although the significance of this custom is more complex.

With regard to his position on the ground we refer to what was said elsewhere (pp. 276-278). Then the attendants place themselves around him and [533] the women, without distinction of age, status of kinship, commence to [152] weep loudly and sing the mirolia (special songs, often improvised) while tearing their hair, beating their breasts and sometimes scratching their [602] cheeks. The next of kin must weep more than the others. The intensity and sadness of the lamentations are in inverse proportion to the age of the deceased.

765 The same is true of mourning. If the deceased was a young person, mourning lasts three to five years. If it was an old person, only one year. An old Sarakatsani woman told us that after the death of her elderly husband she did not replace the red blankets which were part of the decor of her hut with black blankets, for her companion had lived his life and she had her children.

[822] Black is the color of mourning. The women no longer wear embroidered [302] garments, the men put on black shirts and let their beards grow. The [291] mother of the deceased and the widow wear mourning for life, the first [178] because "a mother is never consoled for the loss of her child," the second because "she must be in mourning forever for her spouse."

/336 cont./

765 157 626 Obviously, all these manifestations are social and not religious. They are based on the social control of feelings, the regulation of their intensity and their externalization. /337/ A widow's mourning [542] is the external mark of her status, since, as we have said, the status of the woman must always be apparent. And if she mourns for life it is because the loss of her husband means for her, and in the scale of Sarakatsani social values, an inestimable loss which she must forever regret.

775 MAN IN THE BEYOND.

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.--GHOSTS.

The Sarakatsani believe that after death man continues to live, but an existence as different from earthly life as from that assumed by Christianity.

The soul lives spiritually, but also anthropomorphically. And the dead person may become a ghost. The idea of resurrection exists. But for the Sarakatsani the cycle of life complies more with non-Christian beliefs.

775 724 On the mouth of the deceased a silver coin or a trinket is placed, so that he has the wherewithal to pay his passage to Hades--a reminiscence of the ancient practice of paying Charon to cross the Styx. If he does not have the means of paying, he will be destined for the nether regions.

Next to the corpse, and again on the basis of non-Christian beliefs, are placed cigarettes, apples, oranges, candy, combs, small pocket mirrors, etc. These objects will serve for his own use in the beyond. The fruits are gifts for those who died before him, and the donors add oral messages or messages written on pieces of paper. However, if the deceased is old, these objects are not placed on his deathbed. Next to men, their shepherd's crook is placed. Next to women, their distaff.

/339 cont./
postulate of representation.

Under the table where a feast is served after the burial an iron object is placed. This will transmit its solidity to the participants and protect them from a new attack by Charon who is presumed to be loitering about in the vicinity. (16)

16. In numerous societies "iron keeps away all kinds of phantoms." See K. Birket-Smith: Ibid., p. 400.

/340/ ETERNAL REST AND THE CONTINUATION OF LIFE.

The interdependence of the living and the dead (mentioned briefly above) preached by Christianity on behalf of the repose of the soul and carried out by forgiveness, also occupies a place in the funeral customs of the Sarakatsani. Of course, our herders do not formulate their forgiveness of the dead in a simple thought or phrase, as suggested by the Gospel, which says that all contact with the beyond can be only spiritual, but they surround it with a complex ritual.

After the burial and in conformity with ancient customs of the country, a feast brings together, as we have said above, all those who were present. Food without meat is eaten and wine is drunk. Rice is forbidden for, as a symbol of rootedness and increase, it is in danger of causing evil to take root and multiply. The nearest relatives do not eat, and this for two reasons: the one social, the other religious. The people in mourning must not show appetite. And it is necessary to observe a fast for the repose of the soul of the deceased--a further manifestation of solidarity between the living and the dead. It is while drinking that a wish is formulated for the eternal rest of the deceased. Moreover, one chants anew the miroloia which emphasize distress at departure from this world and the deprivation of the joy of living, but which likewise express the conviction that life is agreeable even in the other world.

/340 cont./

765 769 On the third, ninth and fortieth day after death, and on the day of the first anniversary, there is a solemn commemoration of the deceased. The practices relating to these ceremonies involve, according to the orthodox rite, the preparation of the cakes of the dead, the kolyva (17)

17. A practice which, according to M. Nilsson: Ἑλλην. Λαικὴ Λατρεία. pp. 28-29 goes back to classical antiquity. It is connected with the festival of Anthesteria (third day, festival of the dead).

--grains of boiled wheat put on a plate and covered with sugar--symbolizing the body. They are put on the ground, as we know, the people weep and [533] sing the miroloia, then they carry them to the church where the parish priest says prayers for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

769 Commemoration of the 40th day and of the first anniversary includes a feast served to individuals who took part in the service. On this occasion a lamb is sacrificed. The next of kin do not sit at the table on the 40th day, /341/ but participate at the anniversay feast. If the dead person was the father of a family, a loaf is prepared which the eldest son, at the time of the feast, must place on his head and break, saying: "May God grant my father forgiveness." The commemoration feasts [533] are always accompanied by miroloia.

[765] The Sarakatsani do not forget their dead. If they find themselves in a locality near the cemetery where their dead are buried, it is customary, at least during the first weeks of mourning, for the women to go there at twilight to weep on the grave while uttering heart-rendering cries.

769 796 Moreover, the days consecrated to the dead by the Church (the two Saturdays before Lent, Saint Theodore, etc.) kolyva will be prepared [784] for all the deceased of the family. On these days it is forbidden to wash [302] one's head and comb one's hair, this action inviting death to get tangled [515] up in the hair of the living and strike someone!
[765]
[796]